

East. Iran is quickly advancing its nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities to threaten the United States and our allies in the Middle East and Europe. Our significant political and military gains in Iraq and Afghanistan remain fragile and reversible. Moreover, the Middle East remains the epicenter of violent extremism, serving as a base for terrorist groups who continue to plan and launch attacks against America.

The United States cannot confront these threats alone. Israel has been our most critical partner in the Middle East, helping us to protect our national security. The ability of the United States to defeat our adversaries depends on Israeli support.

Bringing my remarks to conclusion, the relationship between the United States and Israel rests firmly upon the foundation of more than half a century of history. It is grounded in mutual respect, supported by shared values, and guided by our common long-term interests. Therefore, our alliance remains strong and, despite what some may speculate, it will not succumb to the shifting politics of the day or to petty disagreements.

Madam Speaker, for these reasons I call upon the President, members of his administration, and my fellow members of Congress, to remain steadfast in their unwavering commitment to the relationship between the United States and Israel.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO "METROPOLITAN BAPTIST CHURCH" ON THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 19, 2010

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor and enthusiasm that I rise to congratulate Metropolitan Baptist Church as they join together in celebration of their 100th Anniversary. This momentous and joyous celebration will commence on March 21, 2010.

Metropolitan has a very rich history that has given it life and longevity for the past 100 years. At a time when a systematic campaign had been started by area landlords to force African-Americans out of my beloved Harlem, the Metropolitan Baptist Church began with the merger of two churches: Zion Baptist Church pastured by the Reverend P.C. James, and Mercy Seat Baptist Church, pastured by Reverend Dr. N.S. Epps.

The officers of both churches met at the home of Reverend Epps. At the meeting, it was decided that both church names be dropped. Trustee Robert L. Hill of the Mercy Seat Baptist Church suggested the name that would be carried on throughout its History, Metropolitan Baptist Church. A motion was made, carried and recorded, and that day, March 12, 1912, the Metropolitan Baptist Church was started. Its first location was the Subway Church, home of the old Mercy Seat Baptist Church, on West 134th Street near the new 135th Street Subway station. The new church was led by Dr. Epps, its first pastor until 1914.

In 1916, under the Rev. W.W. Brown, the church built the enormous Metropolitan Baptist

Tabernacle at West 138th Street. After the Baptist congregation bought the New York Presbyterian Church on West 128th Street in 1918, where it remains to this day, the Tabernacle became Liberty Hall. This was the focal point of Marcus Garvey's Back-to-Africa movement, where the first convention was held in 1920 of the Universal Negro Improvement Association. Thousands were drawn to the elaborately ritualistic, almost religious, meetings at the hall.

Since its inception, many Governors and Members of Congress from both the Democratic and Republican Party have visited the church to garner the support of its congregants. In 1994, Metropolitan Baptist Church, under the tutelage of Reverend John A. Smith, became a Triple Landmark, having earned Federal, City, and State landmark status.

From its modest beginning, Metropolitan Baptist Church has emerged as a cornerstone of my beloved village of Harlem. Under the guidance of its 5th pastor, Reverend Bobbie McDaniel, Metropolitan continues to thrive, both in terms of spiritual growth as well as practical improvements. The proud members of the church are thankful for the spiritual and emotional leadership he and the previous pastors have provided during their 100 years.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in honoring and congratulating Metropolitan Baptist Church on their historic 100th Anniversary. Their historic significance, constant dedication, and spiritual guidance is worthy of the highest commendation.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS NATIONAL MEMORIAL ACT

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 19, 2010

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, today, H.R. 2788 passed the House with the unanimous support of my colleagues. The bill designates a memorial that is currently under construction at March Field Air Museum, in Riverside, California, as the Distinguished Flying Cross National Memorial.

I am proud that the Distinguished Flying Cross recipients, who have received this prestigious medal for their heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Armed Forces, are closer to having a memorial designated as a National Memorial with the passage of this bill.

March Air Reserve Base is adjacent to the location of the memorial at the March Field Air Museum. Today at the base there are active operational air units providing support to our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, which is why this is an appropriate setting for the memorial to the many aviators who have distinguished themselves by deeds performed in aerial flight.

I am including in today's RECORD, my floor statement from Tuesday, March 16, 2010, regarding H.R. 2788.

FLOOR STATEMENT ON H.R. 2788, THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS MEMORIAL ACT
Rep. Ken Calvert

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2788, a bill to designate a national Disting-

guished flying Cross Memorial in Riverside, California.

I am honored to represent the Inland Empire Chapter of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society which is the primary sponsor of the memorial. Last June, I introduced H.R. 2788 which would designate a memorial, which is currently under construction at March Field Air Museum as the Distinguished Flying Cross National Memorial. It honors all current and former members of the Armed Forces who have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The bill has strong bipartisan support both from the committee and with 48 cosponsors. The legislation is supported by the Distinguished Flying Cross Society, Military Officers Association of America, the Air Force Association, Air Force Sergeants Association, The Association of Naval Aviation, The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, and the China-Burma Indian Veterans Association. I'd like to point out language in the bill that specifically states that the designation shall not be construed to require or permit federal funds to be expended for any purpose related to the national memorial. Funds have been and will continue to be raised through private means for these purposes.

Distinguished Flying Cross recipients have received the prestigious medal for their heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Armed Forces. There are many well-known people that have played a vital role in the history of military aviation and have received the award. This renowned group includes: Captain Charles L. Lindbergh, former President George H. W. Bush, Brigadier General Jimmy Doolittle, General Curtis Lemay, Senator McCain, Jimmy Stewart and Admiral Jim Stockdale, to name just a few.

The March Air Reserve Base, which hosts the C-17As of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing is adjacent to the location of the memorial at the March Field Air Museum. When completed, visitors will be able to witness active operational air units providing support to our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, which is an appropriate setting that honors the many aviators who have distinguished themselves by deeds performed in aerial flight.

I'd like to thank those who have worked tirelessly to ensure this memorial is built and is properly designated in honor of the distinguished aviators that have served this great Nation. In particular, I'd like to recognize, Jim Champlin, with the loving support of his wife Trish, who recently passed away, who have been instrumental in this effort.

Again, I hope you will join me in supporting the designation of the National Distinguished Flying Cross Memorial at the March Field Air Museum and H.R. 2788.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 19, 2010

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I was not present in the chamber yesterday afternoon to vote on rollcalls 131, 132, 133, 134, and 135. I would have voted "yea" on each measure.